Drifter Newsletter #6 April 2010

Drifter building and support team

We are happy to have a growing drifter support team to help users with various aspects of the operations. While all members of this team participate in nearly all phases of the process, the specific tasks are as follows:

- Southern Maine Community College Marine Science
 - Tom Long lead prototype builder
 - Kara LaLomia lead drifter builder
- Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation (GoMLF)
 - Erin Pelletier purchasing and billing
- NOAA
 - Jim Manning lead design and tech supporter
 - Joe Letourneau programmer
 - Shawn Wolff assistant tech support
 - Tanya Stoyanova web developer
 - Grant Emde field tech
 - Dave Novak outreach
- Marine Advanced Technology Education
 - Deirdre Sullivan connection to national COSEE-like initiatives

Since we are all involved with the drifter operations on a part time basis (typically one day per week each), we do not derive our living from the sale of drifters. This is a not-for-profit organization devoted to maximizing the amount of drifters that go in the water and the students who are exposed to the science and engineering aspects of drifter use. If you correspond with Jim, Erin, or Tom via email about any drifter-related issue, please copy all three: james.manning@noaa.gov, erin@gomlf.org, and tlong@smccme.edu so that all three parties are in-the-loop.

New website still under development

While the new drifter homepage is still under development , you can visit it at: http://gisweb.wh.whoi.edu/cgi-bin/ioos/drift/driftTable.cgi . We ask for feedback from you, the participants in this collective effort. We do NOT want to publicize this site until we have heard your feedback and suggestions. Please do not distribute this address to others or link to it from any other website. It may be months before this becomes our primary drifter website. During this transition, we will still consider: http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/drifter/ as the main page.

Dealing with your satellite bills

There are two options now available to pay for satellite fees:

1. pay GoMLF upfront for your expected satellite fees and then get billed by

- GoMLF if you exceed that amount.
- 2. get monthly bills directly from the satellite service provider ComTech Mobile.

In this second case, if you are a new user and haven't got billed from them yet, you need to fill out the ComTech "business agreement" form. To get one of these forms essentially filled out, email Erin (erin@gomlf.gov). Again, please copy tlong@smccme.edu and james.manning@noaa.gov on any emails concerning drifters.

Two Deployment Forms

You need to visit the drifter website both before you deploy and after. Here's why: If you want to label your drifter deployment with the distinct "deployment ID", you will need to know what that is. For this you visit the "Plan deployment" site. If you want us to process your deployment and make real-time plots, you need to tell us the exact time and place of the deployment. For this you visit the "Report deployment". Let me know if you have any troubles with these sites. As with most of our sites, they are "under development".

New Drifter Users:

- Center for Student Coastal Research (Cohasett MA)
- Redwoods Community College (Fort Bragg, California)
- Falmouth High School (Falmouth MA)
- Zephyr Education Foundation (Falmouth MA)
- Atlantic Salmon Federation (St Andrews, New Brunswick)

On building drifters from "kits"

Those that have been through it know that building a drifter from a "kit" is not easy. It requires shopping for a lot of hardware that is not supplied and several hours per drifter of labor. To make things easier we have the following suggestions:

- new users should either buy at least one complete drifter (as a model to go by) or attend one of our "drifter building workshops" that we have from time to time.
- 2. Jigs have been constructed that help with the drilling and cutting
- 3. certain tools make things easier like professional drill presses, table saws, and heat guns
- 4. ask for our latest "Rachel Construction Document" before you start building

On sealing the transmitter

We recently purchased a machine to vacuum-pack the transmitters in clear plastic bags. This eliminates the need for the white vinyl bags we have used in the last few years and provides a way to insert a readable label. We still wrap the edges of the unit with black tape both before and after the vacuum packing. Users should supply us with the cell phone number that beach combers and mariners should call when they find a unit. We will seal the transmitter so that this number is visible.

Center for Student Coastal Research Project

It took two days for high school students from Cohasset MA (and surrounding towns) to build 15 drifters. These units will be used by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries to investigate the pathways of lobster larvae in the vicinity of the new LNG terminal in Mass Bay. In exchange for the students efforts, the Cohasset Center for Student Coastal Research will get 6 drifters of their own to deploy in order to investigate the tidal flushing of their local harbor. See photos below and full story at:

http://www.wickedlocal.com/cohasset/features/x1060307512/Cohasset-High-







